

134. (Previously Presented) An evacuation system according to claim 131 and also comprising simultaneously positioning said multiple platforms in communication with multiple egress levels of said building for simultaneous evacuation.

135. (Previously Presented) A method for simultaneously lifting people to multiple levels of a building comprising:

positioning at least one liftable, multiple-platform, generally vertical transporter in communication with at least one ingress level of a building; and

lifting said multiple platforms of said at least one transporter to multiple floors of said building.

136. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 135 and wherein said positioning comprises sequentially positioning a plurality of stackable platforms, each in communication with said ingress level.

137. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 135 and also comprising stabilizing said transporter against lateral forces.

138. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 135 and also comprising simultaneously positioning said multiple platforms in communication with multiple ingress levels of said building for simultaneous loading.

REMARKS

Applicants have carefully studied the outstanding Office Action in the present application. The present response is intended to be fully responsive to all points of rejection raised by the Examiner and is believed to place the application in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

In the application as examined, claims 70 - 138 are pending, of which claims 86 - 87, 104 - 105 and 119 - 120 were withdrawn. Claims 1 - 69 were previously cancelled.

In the present response, claims 70 - 85, 88 - 103, 106 - 118 and 121 - 138 are unchanged. Withdrawn claims 86 - 87, 104 - 105 and 119 - 120 are cancelled without prejudice.

Claims 70 - 77, 80 - 85, 88 - 94, 97 - 103, 106 - 110, 113 - 118 and 121 - 138 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Reed (U.S. Patent No. 4,732,235) in view of Kucher et al (U.S. Patent No. 4,640,384). Claims 78 - 79, 95 - 96, 101, 111 and 112 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Reed and Kucher et al and further in view of Fitzgerald (GB Patent No. 1424366).

Reed describes collapsible scaffolding including a number of platforms which can be suspended in spaced vertical array by chains secured to the corners of the platform, and arranged at the top for the support of the scaffolding by a crane or a horizontally movable trolley. Kucher describes an emergency evacuation system for a high-rise building including a cable carried on a spool positioned on the top of the building. Fitzgerald describes a portable or collapsible fire escape including a plurality of platforms.

In the rejection of claims 70, 88 and 106 the Examiner wrote:

“Reed discloses a scaffolding system (see figures 1-4 and respective portions of the specification). Reed further depict having at least one lowerable, collapsible, multiple-platform, mutually spacable, generally vertical transporter (i.e. scaffolding) (see figures 1-4) ... Reed does not explicitly describe a controller to control the winch for lowering the scaffolding (i.e. transporter) for evacuation of a building. Nonetheless, Kucher et al. discloses an evacuation system having a

transporter which uses a winch that is driven by a motor that is controlled by a controller to lower and raise the transporter from one floor to a level at which a person can safely egress in case of emergency.” (Office Action, paragraph bridging pages 3-4)

Furthermore, the Examiner wrote:

“The fact that people can move from one platform to the another either up or down does not prevent the scaffolding system of Reed to be raised or lowered (i.e. being used for transportation).” (Office Action, Response to Arguments, page 8)

Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's characterization of the scaffolding of Reed as a 'transporter.' Reed does not show or suggest moving the scaffolding as a transporter for either persons or material. The only movement of the platforms in the scaffolding of Reed takes place during the collapsing of the platforms from an expanded state and during the expanding of the platforms from a collapsed state, at which time the platforms are not in use and are empty, as seen in Figs. 1-4 and in the description thereof. In contrast, the transporter of the present invention is used to transport the platforms from one level at which they have been positioned and loaded to a different level of a building at which egress may safely occur.

Not only does Reed not show or suggest using the scaffolding as a transporter, Reed specifically teaches that movement of people from one platform of the scaffolding to another **cannot be accomplished by transporting the scaffolding**. Furthermore, the expanded scaffolding cannot be transported in its entirety. Reed states:

“A winch may be included at the top of each additional cable, perhaps on the top platform, but whether such a winch is used or an external winch, it will be clear that at least the lowest platforms can be very quickly raised merely by winching in if for example the sea becomes very rough quickly. **It is only necessary for people on the lowest platforms to climb up to higher platforms before winching can commence.**” (Reed, column 1, lines 45-52, emphasis added)

As seen in the highlighted portions above, the platforms of the scaffolding of Reed must be empty before they can be moved. This is due to the fact that the scaffolding, having a top platform which is secured to a fixed location, cannot be raised or lowered in its entirety, but rather

the lower platforms are raised and lowered only to collapse or expand them, respectively. Thus, the scaffolding of Reed is merely a mechanism for expanding or collapsing a scaffolding fixed to a set location on a vertical surface, and cannot be used as a transporter. In contrast, the transporter of the present invention is used to transport the all platforms attached to the transporter **in an expanded and fully loaded state**, from one level at which they have been positioned and loaded to a different level of a building at which egress may safely occur.

While Kucher does show a transporter, Kucher does not show or suggest either a collapsible transporter or a multi-platform transporter. Thus, the combination of Reed and Kucher does not show or suggest either a collapsible transporter or a multi-platform transporter.

Applicants further note that the fire escape of Fitzgerald also does not show or suggest a transporter.

Applicants therefore submit that none of the prior art, either alone or in combination, show or suggest the evacuation system and method for evacuation of the present invention, as recited in claims 70 and 121, respectively, including, inter alia, at least one lowerable, collapsible, generally vertical transporter, and that claims 70 and 121 are therefore patentable.

Applicants submit that none of the prior art, either alone or in combination, show or suggest the evacuation system of the present invention, as recited in claims 88 and 106, including, inter alia, at least one lowerable, multiple-platform, generally vertical transporter, and that claims 88 and 106 are therefore patentable.

Applicants submit that none of the prior art, either alone or in combination, show or suggest the method for evacuation of a building of the present invention, as recited in claims 126 and 131, including, inter alia, at least one lowerable, multiple-platform, generally vertical transporter, and that claims 126 and 131 are therefore patentable.

Applicants submit that none of the prior art, either alone or in combination, show or suggest the method for simultaneously lifting people to multiple levels of a building of the present invention, as recited in claim 135, including, inter alia, positioning at least one liftable, multiple-platform, generally vertical transporter, and that claim 135 is therefore patentable.

Claims 71 - 85 depend directly or ultimately from claim 70 and recite additional patentable subject matter and are therefore patentable. Claims 89 - 103 each depend directly or

ultimately from claim 88 and recite additional patentable subject matter and are therefore patentable.

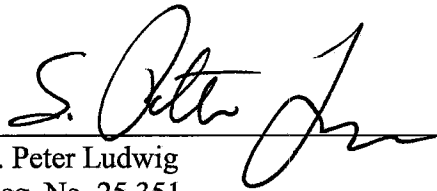
Claims 107 - 118 depend directly or ultimately from claim 106 and recite additional patentable subject matter and are therefore patentable. Claims 122 - 125 each depend directly or ultimately from claim 121 and recite additional patentable subject matter and are therefore patentable.

Claims 127 - 130 depend directly or ultimately from claim 126 and recite additional patentable subject matter and are therefore patentable. Claims 132 - 134 each depend directly or ultimately from claim 131 and recite additional patentable subject matter and are therefore patentable. Claims 136 - 138 depend directly or ultimately from claim 135 and recite additional patentable subject matter and are therefore patentable.

In view of the foregoing, all of the claims are deemed to be allowable. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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